

Glenn Ford refuses to tell it all

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By Roderick Mann

"The truth is my private life has been a great deal more interesting than my professional life," said Glenn Ford. "But if I write about it — and I've now got a couple of firm offers — no-



Glenn Ford: book won't hurt

body's going to get hurt. When I read some of the things that people write about each other in books I'm disgusted."

He's right. His private life has been interesting. He is the only Hollywood actor I know who ever joined the French Foreign Legion because of unrequited love. And he is the only actor I can think of who has climbed Mont Blanc. And as a footloose bachelor he used to escort some of the most attractive women in Hollywood.

Ford's day-to-day thoughts on all this are carefully written down in the small red journals he has been keeping for years.

Won't reveal everything

"I was totally truthful in them," he said. "I wrote down what I thought of people. But those thoughts won't go into print. I know it's fashionable to go into detail about one's love life, and tell stories about other people, but I won't do that."

The actor who has starred — it's hard to believe — in 220 features, leaves for Canada shortly to begin a new film for J. Lee Thompson, Happy Birthday to Me.

And he has already begun work on a film project that has long been dear to him, the story of Marine Lt.-Gen. Lewis (Chesty) Puller, one of the U.S. Marine Corps' most decorated officers.

"I served under him," said Ford. "And in the Second World War I actually played him on a radio program. It was on a weekly show called The Halls of Montezuma. When they told Chesty they'd found an actor to play him, he growled: 'I don't want no actor type playing me.' Then they explained I was a sergeant in the Marines, and that made it all right. 'If he were an actor type he wouldn't be a Marine' was his philosophy. I got four weeks off to do it."

Ever since Ford decided to make the film — it will be called Chesty — he's run into obstacles.

"People have been coming out of the woodwork to tell me they thought of it first or they have certain rights to the story," he said. "I'm not anxious to get into legal battles over it but I'm still going right ahead. And because I served with them, I've got the Marine Corps' full backing."

Glenn Ford's house in Beverly Hills,

Calif., is full of memorabilia of his colorful life. He even has a large photograph of himself being released from the French Foreign Legion.

"It happened when I was making a movie called The Green Glove in France," he said. "I fell in love with my leading lady but she didn't want to know. So one night I got bombed on bouillabaise and brandy and with the help of a friend went to Legion headquarters in Marseilles. Not till I woke up in camp next day and found a one-eyed German sergeant hitting my feet with a bayonet did I realize I'd enlisted."

Married three times

"Getting me out wasn't easy but fortunately the motion picture union in France is very powerful. The actress — she was Geraldine Brooks — didn't talk to me for days. She thought I was crazy. I may say I haven't touched bouillabaise since."

Married three times, Glenn Ford has squired a lot of attractive women in his time. And only one relationship — his first marriage to Eleanor Powell — was an unhappy one, he says.

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